



St Ralph Sherwin

Today Rather Than Tomorrow

School Motto

*God shines within our hearts.
Jesus walks by our side.
The Holy Spirit gives us strength.*

There is no better way of carrying out this intention than by welcoming visitors into our school within the ethos and philosophy expressed in the above Mission Statement.

Prayer and liturgy Policy (reference Prayer and Liturgy Directory-‘To Love You more dearly’)

Within our Catholic community, where prayer, liturgy and celebration of the word are an important part of our daily life, the Christian values of friendship, compassion and forgiveness are shared with all.

We believe that Christian Prayer, liturgy and Celebration of the Word in a Catholic school is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God: it is our loving response in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into a relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

As Catholic Christians, we are guided by the values of the Gospel and the beliefs of our own faith tradition, whilst at the same time, respectful of the beliefs of others.

Therefore, it considers the religious and educational needs of all, who share in it, whatever their denomination or religious standing.

Legal Requirements.

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of liturgy and prayer for all pupils. Yet it is much more than a legal requirement- it is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

The headteacher is responsible for arranging daily liturgy and prayer after consulting with the governing body.

We understand that simply holding an assembly, which includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement.

We also acknowledge that assembly, prayer, liturgy and Celebration of the word are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering but the difference between the two will always be made clear. The Act of Worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including Religious Education.

Values and Aims.

We aim to provide a warm, welcoming, happy and caring environment in which individuals can explore, express and develop their own personal relationship with God within the context of a worshipping community.

Our faith is at the heart of all we do and the broad and balanced curriculum we aim to provide is within this context.

The school encourages and values the role played by teachers, governors and parents and the wider



St Ralph Sherwin

Today Rather Than Tomorrow

community in supporting the spiritual, physical and educational growth of all our children.

We would truly hope to be seen as a Gospel inspired community.

We believe at this school that collective worship both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life.

Our caring ethos, and the value which we place on the development of the whole child (spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually) is reflected in our prayer, liturgy and Celebration of the Word.

We value this special time in the school day for the space it gives children to develop a reflective approach to life and the ability to express their reflections in traditionally religious ways or any other appropriate manner.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of our School

We endorse the belief that Prayer and Liturgy takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

- Those who form part of the worshipping community in church.
- Those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church.
- Those from other Christian traditions – or none.
- Those from other faith backgrounds

Through our prayer, liturgy and Celebration of the Word we aim to provide a caring and supporting environment for children to:

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce prayers, which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitude
- To participate fully
- To take time out to 'wonder at' to 'come to terms with' and 'give worth to.'

Principles

All acts of worship in this school will:

- give Glory and honour to God



St Ralph Sherwin

Today Rather Than Tomorrow

- be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds, in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the church

In order to do this, celebrations will be:

- on a small scale and wherever possible, help to personalise the experience
- short and paced appropriately for the age of the children
- as simple as possible

Planning prayer, liturgy and Celebration of the Word will be:

Properly planned

Adequately resourced

Recorded

Monitored

Evaluated

Prayer, Liturgy and Celebration of the Word is seen as an essential part of Religious experience and is therefore an integral part of our school day.

We aim to actively involve children in ways which are suited to their age and stage of personal, social and religious development.

Prayer, Liturgy and Celebration of the Word may take a variety of forms:

- Whole School Masses
- Rejoice Celebrations
- Whole School Good Work Assemblies
- Class Liturgies / Masses
 - Universal Prayer groups
 - Lectio Divina
 - Faith in Action
 - Minnie Vinnies
- Reconciliation Services
- An experience on residential visits
- In the school memorial garden and Rainbow room.



St Ralph Sherwin

Today Rather Than Tomorrow

In all of our liturgies we try to make use of artefacts and visual aids which enhance the spiritual awareness of our children.

Masses

The whole school celebrates Mass at the beginning of the year and at the end of the Summer term.

All classes attend week day mass. Mass is also celebrated on Holy Days which occur within the school week, during term time.

In addition, Year Three children are involved in First Forgiveness and First Holy Communion celebrations. At the end of the academic year, we have a mass and a Leavers' assembly celebrating their final year in the school. These celebrations allow the children to be actively involved in the liturgy. Parents are invited to participate in the celebrations.

Assemblies

A whole school assembly is held at the beginning of each school week.

Key Stage assemblies take place weekly followed by Star of the Week assembly on a Friday.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

At Key Stage 2, a class reconciliation services take place during the seasons of Advent and Lent. The celebration includes readings, prayers and songs and the children are also given time for quiet reflection. An opportunity is then given for the children to receive the sacrament individually.

The children at Key Stage 1, participate in less formal services.

Class Prayer and Celebration of the Word

Within the classroom setting, Prayer and Celebration of the Words may take the form of celebrations for each topic or may focus on seasonal events.

Parents / guardians / governors are welcome to attend any of the liturgies and masses.

Daily prayers are said in each class, in the morning, before and after lunch and at home time. These will involve formal and informal prayers with time also given for private prayer and reflection.

Each classroom also has a focal point for prayer. There is a crucifix, and there may be a poster or a special book chosen by the teacher and the children. This display with the appropriate coloured cloth changes to suit the liturgical season. Each class has a holding cross which is kept on the class prayer focus. It may be used privately by children or during class prayer times and liturgies.



St Ralph Sherwin

Today Rather Than Tomorrow

The Planning, Content and Delivery Prayer, Liturgy and Celebration of the Word is planned:

- Following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, linking with the R.E. scheme, "Come and See" or significant dates. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship.
- Involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and policies.
- With flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community.
- To develop the children's skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.
- Guest visitors and clergy members are also used to deliver assemblies on a variety of topics including supporting various kinds of charity work.

Recording Prayer and Liturgy:

- Evidence is retained in a liturgy folder and / or a floor book so that there is a note of themes, leaders, children's groupings, and resources.
- Through displays, collections of children's contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

We also feel that each **Come** and **See** lesson (Religious Education) is an act of worship.

The celebration of the Eucharist, being central to the Catholic life of our school and collective worship, allows for masses and services to be celebrated throughout the year, to mark special events in the church's liturgical year and /or life of the school.

Resources

The subject lead oversees the provision of resources.

- All the children have access to a range of cloths and items with which to dress the focus table, in order for it to reflect the church's liturgical year and or special events in the church's calendar.
- Each class has its own liturgy box/basket, which they use to plan class or key stage worship.
- The school has a wide variety of bibles (including class sets) which are age appropriate. Each class also has a range of books which are concerned with religious subjects such as prayer, the mass and people of faith.
- We have a forest school area, where Celebration of the Word and Prayer regularly takes place, especially in key stage 1 in order to better appreciate the wonder of creation.



St Ralph Sherwin

Today Rather Than Tomorrow

Voluntary Prayer

The chaplaincy team meet each week and share bible stories with other children and reflect on their content.

They will also celebrate important events in the church's year e.g. meet once a week in October and May to lead the Rosary.

The Rainbow Room, opened by Bishop Malcolm, is always available for quiet prayer and reflection during playtimes and lunchtimes. It is also used by groups of pupils to lead universal prayer and the Lectio Divina. Staff retreat and reflection time is lead by the lay chaplain every Thursday afternoon.

Parish Community Parishioners are always encouraged to join us in celebrating the Eucharist, liturgies and to attend whole school worship throughout the year.

Pupil Leadership

All pupils participate in prayer and Celebration of the Word with clear identification of liturgy leaders.

Pupil engagement and creativity

A range of role play, quizzes, group discussion and art are regularly used within worship.

Personal Impact

Pupils link liturgical prayer to world events (for example G7 and Climate Change) and Come and See liturgical themes.

Monitoring and Review of the policy

The coordination and planning of Prayer, Liturgy and Celebration of the Word is the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- Supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in Prayer and Liturgy, and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject in the school.
- Evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in Prayer, Liturgy and Celebration of the Word and indicates areas for further improvement.
- Evidence of the children's work, and to observe lessons of Prayer, Liturgy and Celebration of the Word across the school. The quality of teaching and learning in Prayer, Liturgy and Celebration of the Word is reviewed and evaluated by the Headteacher as part of the school's agreed cycle of monitoring and moderation. Subject leaders are further supported in their role through governor links.



St Ralph Sherwin

Today Rather Than Tomorrow

Monitoring and Evaluation

The headteacher keeps a record of monitoring, to ensure Prayer, Liturgy and Celebration of the Word meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship. Members of the LGB also monitor Acts of Prayer.

The chaplaincy team will also monitor Celebration of the Word occasionally. Our new Lay Chaplain also organises with the pupils' class retreats and supports pupils and teachers in the delivery of Prayer, Liturgy and Celebration of the Word. The children themselves evaluate the Celebration of the Word and the responses are shared with the children and kept in a file.

The policy is monitored by the RE subject lead, who is also the headteacher and is to be reviewed by the staff and governors every two years. It is due to be reviewed in October 2027.

This policy is based on the CMAT Trust Aims, Diocesan Expectations, Staff and Pupil Voice in conjunction with the Governing Body and the lay Chaplain.